



May Wellness Newsletter

Special Points of Interest

- ♪ Congenital Heart Walk
- ♪ Healthy Recipe
- ♪ Financial Wisdom
- ♪ Sprout
- ♪ It Fits Tips
- ♪ Lunch Meat
- ♪ Herb/Spice of the Month

Vicki Mouser has formed a team for the 2016 West Michigan Congenital Heart Walk. Event will be held Saturday, May 21th, 2016. To join the team, please follow this link: http://events.congenitalheartwalk.org/site/TR/Walk/General?team_id=11234&pg=team&fr_id=1493



You may also join by following this link to the main page: http://events.congenitalheartwalk.org/site/TR?fr_id=1493&pg=entry then clicking "join a team," "join as a new participant" and search for team name "Calhoun County Public Health Department."

If you have any questions, please contact Vicki Mouser (969-6384 or vmouser@calhouncountymi.gov).

This event qualifies for a point on your Ticket to Wellness.

HEALTHY RECIPE SUBMITTED BY

Marie St-Amand

AVOCADO & HUMMUS QUESADILLA

Ingredients:

- 4 whole wheat tortillas
- 1/2 cup hummus
- 1/4 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tbsp minced cilantro
- 1 avocado, cut into thin slices
- Crumbled queso fresco

Directions:

In a small bowl, stir together the hummus, cumin and cilantro.

Spread the hummus mixture on each tortilla. Divide the avocado slices and queso fresco evenly between the quesadillas, arranging them on one half of the tortilla.

Heat a large skillet over medium heat. Place quesadillas in the pan and cook until the tortillas are golden brown, 2 to 3 minutes per side.

Repeat with the remaining quesadillas. Serve.



May Financial Wisdom



Help Your Retirement Savings

BLOSSOM

Understand the Basics
of Diversification

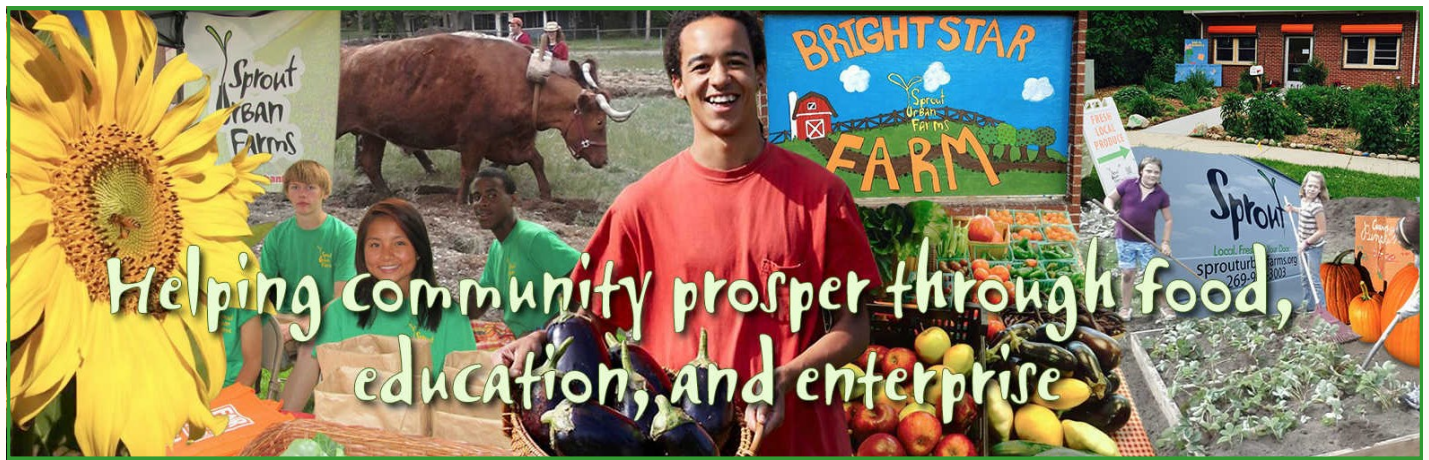


Reduce your risk and maximize your savings by investing in a variety of ways—In other words, don't put all your eggs in one basket. Spread out your investments among industries and risk levels to build a diversified portfolio. Seek the advice of a professional to help you invest wisely for your personal situation.

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<http://www.sproutbc.org/>

Sprout Farm Stand

Summer: May-October

Thursday-Sunday

10am to 6pm

Winter: November-April

Friday and Saturday

11am to 6pm

245 N Kendall Street, Battle Creek, MI



History

In 2009, Sprout Urban Farms founding organizer and current Executive Director, Jeremy Andrews, was approached by residents about starting a community garden. Andrews began to organize community forums based around that and to his surprise over 100 people attended.

From that forum, the projects and passion for Sprout was established. The attendees decided Sprout would serve as a network of community gardens while educating the community to issues surrounding food, improving food access in town and engaging youth.

In 2011, the organization received its first grant from Fair Food Network to hire a diverse array of local youth to work in community gardens. Later that year, the organization launched its second effort to improve food access (with the gardens being the first) when they launched a mobile market experiment with the Battle Creek Community Foundation called Fresh on Wheels.

In 2012, the Calhoun County Land Bank approached Sprout about leasing property to create the first youth run urban farm in Battle Creek. After looking at numerous sites, a 2-acre property in Washington Heights was selected. The site, formerly the home of Battle Creek Academy and Bright Star Faith Temple, was renamed Bright Star Farm.

The addition of Bright Star to the Sprout Network allowed us to begin farming the land and selling the produce at local farmers markets, Fresh on Wheels, and local restaurants.

Since our beginnings, we have continued to work to revitalize Battle Creek through local economic development through something Battle Creek did over one hundred years ago, food. We are founded on principles of community organizing. Thus our success, direction and goals come directly from the voices of our community.



TIPS

Did you know that stress and cortisol go hand in hand, and cortisol and belly fat go hand in hand? Cortisol, also known as the stress hormone, is released when you experience emotional, mental, or physical stress. This hormone aids in the body's flight or fight response, giving you the energy to deal with the stress. In the short term, this burst of extra energy can be helpful. However, high cortisol levels are extremely disruptive to the body and may result in numerous health problems such as diabetes, high blood pressure, elevated blood sugar, depression, and anxiety. Elevated cortisol levels will even slow down weight loss and can lead to weight gain.

If you have experienced any of these problems following a particularly difficult time in your life or want to avoid them because of stress you're experiencing now, you will need to take steps that can help stabilize your cortisol levels. So with Spring finally here, cortisol gives us a whole new reason to slow down and smell the flowers. If you're ready to start combating your cortisol and smell a few flowers along the way, following a few of this month's tips can help make it less stressful and may even speed up your weight loss success.

1. **Cut the Caffeine.** Caffeine taps your adrenal glands to release cortisol, which can be helpful before a big presentation to sharpen your focus. But when you mix it with stress, your cortisol levels jump higher and remain higher longer.
2. **Sleep.** To avoid elevated cortisol brought on by the stress of fatigue, you must get 7 to 9 hours of sleep every day.
3. **Watch your diet.** Incorporate eggs, lean meat, oily fish such as salmon and tuna, citrus fruits, berries, fortified cereals, dark leafy greens, and create a diet high in fiber and lean protein. Eating five small meals a day will also lower your cortisol, relieving your body of hunger stress, and help with the food cravings associated with high levels of cortisol.
4. **Curb the Carbs.** Significantly decrease your starch and carbohydrate consumption. Eliminate sugar. It will be very difficult to do this initially as cortisol increases your desire for sweet food and carbohydrates. Sate yourself at those times with fresh fruits.
5. **Exercise.** Regular exercise 3 to 5 times a week is extremely important in regulating the body's cortisol levels. When you exercise, your body will produce more natural dopamine and endorphins that will combat depression, lethargy, and anxiety. You will also shed the pounds and bloat brought on by elevated cortisol.

Is Lunch Meat Bad for You? Here's the Truth.

In October of 2015, the World Health Organization (WHO) slapped processed meats — including cold cuts like bologna and pastrami — with a Group 1 “carcinogenic to humans” label, meaning they cause cancer. Researchers considered more than 800 cancer studies across the world to reach their conclusions, which also linked excessive red meat consumption to higher incidences of the disease.

The health warnings about deli meat should be heeded; too much of a good thing can really hurt you

Even more startling: They found that eating a surprisingly small amount of processed meat could raise your cancer risk. In terms of hard numbers, WHO discovered that 50 grams eaten daily — or, about 1.7 ounces of salami — increases your chance of getting colorectal cancer by 18 percent. One hundred grams would increase the risk by 36 percent, and so forth. The American Cancer Society warns that excessive consumption might tie in to other cancers, as well.

Sounds awful, doesn't it? Add in the high sodium and fat content of lots of lunch meats, and it makes you want to swear off ham sandwiches for the rest of your life.

But Wait!

Buried in those depressing findings are two pieces of valuable, qualifying information:

First, as pointed out by both The Huffington Post and The Atlantic, eating two slices of daily deli meat doesn't knock your chance of getting colorectal cancer to 18 percent. It bumps your *risk* by 18 percent, from about 4.5 to 5.3 percent over the course of a lifetime. While you might want to lay off the liverwurst, something like smoking is far, far more carcinogenic, comparatively.

Second, certain cold cuts like turkey aren't a total no-no, and can even be part of a healthy diet. “Rather than deprive yourself altogether, exercise moderation with your lunch meats, and be smart about incorporating other healthy foods and habits into your daily routines,” advises Jessica Iannotta, a registered dietician and COO of Savor Health. By understanding the issues and making careful, well-considered choices (chicken breast rather than a pile of bologna), you can still delight in turkey subs, and even the occasional BLT.

Why it Matters What You Order

When it comes to deli meats, there are two chief health concerns: nitrates/nitrites and nutritional value — specifically, sodium and saturated fat content.



Lunch Meat (continue)

Synthetic nitrates and nitrites inhibit rotting, keeping cold cuts fresh and flavorful; they're also the chief suspects in the cancer debacle. "Nitrates are used to preserve the meat," says Lauri Wright, spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, "but they have been shown to increase risk for certain cancers such as colorectal cancer, heart disease and diabetes." While it's a strong link and not a proven direct cause, limiting your nitrate and nitrite intake is definitely advisable.

Deli meats are also commonly full of sodium, which raises blood pressure, stressing your heart, kidneys and other VIPs (Very Important Parts). "Processed meats are created by curing, salting, smoking or preserving with additives, and thus they are notoriously high in sodium content," says Iannotta. Federal government guidelines suggests limiting your daily sodium intake to 2300 mg at most, but aiming for 1500 mg and under — the equivalent of five ounces of pastrami.

And of course, there's the saturated fat. "Most deli meats are high in fat, as well," says Wright. "Almost 50 percent of calories per serving are fat and many are saturated fats, which are not heart healthy." Mortadella and corned beef are two of the worst perpetrators, though you might want to skip the bacon on your next club sandwich, too.

What to Eat Instead

When all these health hazards are considered together, you understand why WHO warned people off of processed meats. Still, you can include cold cuts as part of your diet by keeping the following guidelines in mind:

Scale back your sandwich schedule. "Enjoy cold cuts on occasion, at most once or twice a week," says Iannotta. And if you must have that daily hero, "Get creative by swapping cold cuts and processed meats for fresh meat like baked or grilled turkey or chicken, or canned fish like sardines, tuna or salmon."

Steer clear of the really unhealthy meats altogether. Keep in mind that ultra-processed cold cuts like bologna, liverwurst, and pastrami generally contain more nitrates and nitrites, sodium and fat than leaner whole meats like chicken and turkey. Also, if it comes in a plastic container and hangs from a hook, odds are it's not a great lunch choice. "Avoid the pre-packed lunch meats and hot dogs," advises Wright. Check out the nutrition label to be sure.

Pick your sandwich fillings wisely. "Choose low-sodium versions of deli meats, pile on the vegetables (think avocado, tomato, lettuce, cucumber, spinach, peppers), and nix the cheese," says Iannotta. "Also, opt for leaner meats like turkey, chicken or roast beef." While leaner cuts are processed to some extent, they're generally not as unhealthy as a hunk of salami. Have the meats sliced right at the deli counter or opt for high-quality packaged brands like Applegate Farms, frequently heralded as the gold standard.

Cooking meat at home and eating it all through the week is another smart option, since you control exactly what goes into your food. "If you roast a chicken or roast beef for dinner, the leftovers can be sliced into a sandwich the next day," suggests Sally Eisenberg, a Certified Health Coach and founder of Nourish Ur Life. "Serve with lettuce and tomato and a side salad or sliced veggies and you're already ahead of the game."

Ultimately, the health warnings about deli meat should be heeded; too much of a good thing can really hurt you. But armed with the right information, you can limit the damage to a few drops of mustard on your tablecloth.

By Kristen Sturt

Courtesy of Carl Gibson, Senior Services Director

Herb of the Month or Spice of the Month?

What are Bay Leaves?

Ever wondered what bay leaf really tastes like? Why stock, soup, and sauce recipes everywhere call for its inclusion? It's hardly a vibrant flavor, and in the presence of stronger ingredients it becomes a wallflower. Compared to herbs like basil and cilantro, it's downright dull.

Bay may not be the flashiest flavor in the cook's toolbox, but it's more potent than you may think. The trick is to think of it like a spice, not an herb. A spice with a bit of mint, a bit of thyme, some oregano, and aspects of coriander and clove. Just like allspice sings backup to cinnamon and nutmeg, bay brings the best out of warm spices and meaty flavors.

Add to slow-cooking meals. Bay leaves release their flavor during slow cooking, so the longer the better. Consider adding bay leaves to casseroles, stews, soups, marinades, pasta sauces. Bay leaves also impart a great flavor to white, cream/cheese sauces (for example, béchamel sauce).

Steam with bay leaves. The flavor of bay comes out nicely with steaming. Try with vegetables, fish, seafood, or chicken in a steamer.

Always remove after cooking and prior to serving. Although bay leaves impart a lovely flavor to the food with which they are cooked, they are not appetizing in themselves. Anyone who has bitten into the forgotten bay leaf will quickly attest to this! Fish it out before serving the dish on plates. This is also why it's important to put the *whole* bay leaf into the dish, so it can be removed easily later. Don't break it up into small pieces.



PORK CARNITAS

Ingredients:

4 pound boneless pork butt, fat trimmed and cut into 2 inch cubes
1 1/2 tsp salt
3/4 tsp pepper
1 tsp ground cumin
1 onion, peeled and halved
2 bay leaves
1 tsp dried oregano
2 Tb fresh lime juice
1 1/2 C water
1 medium orange, juiced and keep the spent halves

Instructions:

Combine all the ingredients in a slow cooker, including the spent orange halves and juice. Cook on low for 8 hours.

Use a slotted spoon to remove the meat from the slow cooker and place it on a large foil-lined pan. Remove and discard everything from the slow cooker except for the cooking liquid. Place cooking liquid on high heat on the stove and boil until it thickens, about 20 - 30 minutes. You should have about 1 C of liquid remaining when it is finished.

While the liquid is reducing, use two forks to pull each cube of pork into three equal sized pieces. Once the liquid has reduced, gently fold in the pieces of pork into the pot. Try not to break up the pork any further. Taste and add additional salt and pepper.

Spread the pork back onto the foil lined pan and evenly spread the meat around so there is a single layer of meat. Place the pan on the lower middle rack of the oven and broil until the top of the meat is well browned and edges are slightly crisp, about 5 to 8 minutes. Using a wide metal spatula, flip the pieces of meat and broil the other side until well browned and edges are slightly crisp, 5 to 8 minutes. Serve immediately in a tortilla with all your favorite toppings.

